

would have more incentive to invest in new jobs and new equipment. As a result, our economy is strong, and growing stronger. Economic output in the third quarter rose at its fastest annual pace in nearly 20 years. More manufacturers reported rising factory activity than at any point in the last 20 years. American homeownership reached its highest level ever. Employment is on the rise. By cutting tax rates on investment gains and dividend payments, we promoted saving, capital formation, and investment—and Americans' holdings in the stock market rose by almost \$3 trillion.

There is still more to do, however. We cannot be satisfied until every American looking for work has found a job. We must sustain the momentum of this recovery by making the tax relief passed in 2001 and 2003 permanent. We will continue to open markets abroad for American products. And as the economy improves, we will also confront the challenge faced by workers who must learn new skills to fill new jobs. As a Nation, we must help Americans develop the skills they need to succeed in a highly competitive, highly productive economy. And so this Budget continues to support high standards for our schools and proposes a Jobs for the 21st Century initiative to ensure older students and adults can gain the skills they need to find work now.

Economic growth and good stewardship of taxpayer dollars will help us meet another important priority: cutting the budget deficit brought on by recession and war. We must continue to evaluate each Federal program, to make sure that it meet its goals, and produces and desired results. I proposed to hold discretionary spending growth below four percent, less than the average rate of growth of American family incomes. And spending unrelated to defense and homeland security will be held below one percent growth—less than the rate of inflation—while continuing to meet education, health care, and other priorities of this Nation. With this spending restraint and continued pro-growth economic policies, we can cut the deficit in half over the next five years.

Finally, this Budget addresses the needs of a great and compassionate Nation, whose values are strong, and whose institutions of hope are enduring. We are helping communities of faith pull the addicted out of dependency. We are lifting children out of a life of despair by making sure they have mentors, and we will continue to press for improvements in our schools, so that no child is left behind. We are extending hope and healing to millions suffering from the global epidemic of AIDS. We will begin to implement of the benefits of our Medicare modernization and reform law, which will bring all our seniors coverage for prescription drugs. And we will make health care more affordable and extend the full benefits of our health care system to more Americans who currently have no health insurance.

Meeting these priorities will require hard work, skill, and the resources of a great Nation. Yet America has always risen to new challenges, and has always set new goals. Challenge and change have revealed the true strengths of this Nation and the enterprise of its people. And as 2004 begins, I am confident those gifts will serve us again, until our work is done.

GEORGE W. BUSH.  
February 2, 2004.

□ 1415

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMMONS). Pursuant to the provisions of clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair announces that he will postpone further proceedings today on each motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Such record votes, if postponed, will be taken after 6:30 p.m. today.

#### EXPRESSING SORROW ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE SPACE SHUTTLE "COLUMBIA" ACCIDENT

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 507), expressing the profound sorrow of the House of Representatives on the anniversary of the accident that cost the crew of the Space Shuttle *Columbia* their lives, and extending heartfelt sympathy to their families.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 507

Whereas February 1, 2004, marks the one year anniversary of the accident that claimed the Space Shuttle *Columbia* and the lives of seven heroic astronauts that made up its crew;

Whereas, while in orbit, *Columbia's* experienced crew conducted important microgravity research into the life sciences, physical sciences, and space and earth sciences, in addition to promoting education initiatives;

Whereas the *Columbia* experienced a structural failure that resulted in its destruction over the States of Texas and Louisiana as it approached to land on February 1, 2003;

Whereas the seven crew members of STS-107, Rick D. Husband (Commander), William C. McCool (Pilot), Michael P. Anderson (Payload Commander), Kalpana Chawla (Mission Specialist), David M. Brown (Mission Specialist), Laurel B. Clark (Mission Specialist), and Ilan Ramon (Payload Specialist) exhibited unparalleled bravery and commitment to the goal of exploring space and advancing mankind's search for knowledge in the cosmos;

Whereas Rick Husband, 45, was a Colonel in the United States Air Force, a test pilot, and a veteran of STS-96, and held degrees from Texas Tech University and California State University, Fresno;

Whereas William C. McCool, 41, was a Commander in the United States Navy and test pilot, and held degrees from the United States Naval Academy and the University of Maryland;

Whereas Michael P. Anderson, 43, was a Lieutenant Colonel in the United States Air

Force, a former pilot instructor and tactical officer, and a veteran of STS-89, and held degrees from the University of Washington and Creighton University;

Whereas Kalpana Chawla, 41, was an aerospace engineer, a Federal Aviation Administration Certified Flight Instructor, and a veteran of STS-87, and held degrees from Punjab Engineering College (India), the University of Texas at Arlington, and the University of Colorado, Boulder;

Whereas David M. Brown, 46, was a Captain in the United States Navy, a naval aviator, and a naval flight surgeon, and held degrees from the College of William and Mary and Eastern Virginia Medical School;

Whereas Laurel B. Clark, 41, was a Commander in the United States Navy and naval flight surgeon, and held degrees from the University of Wisconsin, Madison;

Whereas Ilan Ramon, 48, was a Colonel in the Israeli Air Force, a fighter pilot, and Israel's first astronaut;

Whereas these brave astronauts will never be forgotten by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration family and all those who believe in the importance of exploring our universe; and

Whereas when the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Mars Exploration Rover (MER) Spirit landed on Mars on January 3, 2004, it brought with it a small commemorative plaque bearing the names of the seven astronauts, establishing an enduring memorial on another planet to the fallen crew of Space Shuttle *Columbia*: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the House of Representatives does offer its gratitude to the seven Space Shuttle *Columbia* astronauts and its heartfelt sympathy to their families on the anniversary of their loss, with the reassurance that this sacrifice will not have been made in vain, but will strengthen this Nation's resolve to continue their journey of discovery.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. LAMPSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H. Res. 507.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the majority leader of the House of Representatives, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY).

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) for bringing this very important resolution to the floor of the House.

Mr. Speaker, we can still see their faces. Their friends can still hear their hearty laughter. And their families can still feel their embrace. At every mention of their names or reminder of their courage, our hearts ache with the hollow pangs of mourning and our thoughts and prayers turn to their loved ones. For there is no loss like the loss of a hero. And 1 year ago our Nation and our world lost seven.